

3-24-10

To: Regulatory Reform Committee

From: Vince Consiglio, President ABATE of Michigan, 248 672-0957

RE: HB 4747, Motorcycle Helmet Repeal Bill

Dear Honorable Members,

I have been an avid motorcyclist for many years. I have ridden a motorcycle over 20,000 miles per year, each year since 1974. I have been a member of ABATE of Michigan board of Directors since 1975. I have testified on the motorcycle helmet law issue in Michigan at every hearing held in the Michigan Legislature since 1976. No surrounding state has a mandatory helmet law. In fact let's look at the facts. According to NHTSA stats, in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin, from 1994-2007, the fatalities per 100,000 registered motorcycles were 41.90. Michigan's fatalities, per 100,000 for the same time period was 42.32. Helmets **DO NOT** PREVENT accidents.

ABATE of Michigan has always promoted tougher motorcycle licensing, motorcycle safety education, and a motorcycle car driver awareness program as an alternative to mandatory helmet laws. Motorcycle licensing is a major issue in Michigan. 1989-1993 the Secretary of State did a study on motorcycle fatalities. 49% of the fatalities did not have a cycle endorsement. In 2002 the University of Michigan did a similar study that found that 42% of the fatalities didn't have a cycle endorsement. In 2008, the Office of Highway Safety Planning had the figure at 38%. Why is that number so high?

The state motorcycle licensing program is privatized, yet the Michigan Motorcycle Safety Fund pays the administrative cost of the private motorcycle testing program. ABATE of Michigan has fought to keep the safety fund solvent over the years. In 1982, the motorcycle safety education law was passed, in 1987, 1989, 1992, 1995, 2002, ABATE pushed additional legislation to keep the safety program going. ABATE's Awareness Program is self funded and takes ABATE members into driver training classes across the state to educate new drivers on how to prevent motorcycle accidents.

I spend my vacation money in "FREE" states. ...those that have freedom of choice. Many motorcyclists in the Midwest do not ride to Michigan as a direct result of the mandatory helmet law. Michigan loses millions of dollars each year because of the mandatory helmet law.

Please vote Yes on this bill. Can I answer any questions and concerns from this committee?